DURHAM, N. C.
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Front Page | Edit Page | Other Page
Date: NOV 16 1963

Approved For Release 2001/03/02 : CIA-RDP70-00058R0[redacted]4

STATINTL

Other Remedies For Side Result

The arrest of a Yale professor on spy charges in Russia has already been explained as a predictable result of recent U.S.-Soviet prisoner exchanges.

Former C. I. A. chief Allen Dulles wrote some time ago that these exchanges might lead other countries to arrest innocent Americans for trading purposes when or if one of their agents fell into American hands. Swapping convicted spies is certainly no less a departure from espionage traditions than President Eisenhower's public statement accepting responsibility for Francis Gary Powers' fateful U-2 flight. Under the old rules of the "great game," the cover stories stood whether anyone believed them or not. Agents caught in peace time were never acknowledged, let alone swapped for by their governments.

In the light of Professor Barghoorn's arrest, there may be rising pressure to return to the old rules. But this is very much like the armchair criticism of Powers for not biting his cyanide tablet. Even in the great game of espionage, leaving a man to death or a wasted lifetime in prison is not something leaders in this country can readily accept just because of some unwritten rules.

There is, after all, no point in denying the obvious fact that this country and most of the rest of the world employs agents on secret information-gathering missions abroad. And if swapping some prisoners whose espionage threat faded with their arrest did create the hazard that caught Professor Barghoorn, there are other remedies for this side result than letting men like Francis Gary Powers grow old in a Soviet cell.

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Approved For Release 2001/03/02 : CIA-RDP70-00058R000200070035-4